



U.S. Immigration  
and Customs  
Enforcement

April 13, 2005

# News Release

## **ICE ARRESTS DOMINICAN CHILD PREDATOR** *Predator Convicted of Abusing a 16-year-old Girl*

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico – A 55-year-old citizen of the Dominican Republic convicted of sexually assaulting a 16-year-old girl was arrested here Tuesday by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) special agents.

Jose Antonio Tapia Gomez has been a Lawful Permanent Resident (LPR) of the United States since Oct. 1983. He has been placed in removal proceedings and is facing the revocation of his legal permanent residence. He is amenable for removal under the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA) based on his aggravated felony conviction for sexually abusing a minor [section 237(a)(2)(A)(iii) and 101(a)(43)(A)].

"We will continue to use every law enforcement tool at our disposal to protect our most vulnerable from predators like Tapia-Gomez," said Lydia St. John-Mellado, acting ICE special agent-in-charge in San Juan. "Heinous criminals who prey on our children will be held accountable for their actions."

Tapia-Gomez is in ICE custody at the Metropolitan Detention Center awaiting the outcome of his case.

This arrest is part of Operation Predator, a comprehensive national initiative to protect young people from sexual predators. Operation Predator targets human traffickers, international sex tourists, Internet pornographers and foreign national predators whose crimes make them deportable. Since Operation Predator was launched in July 2003, ICE agents have arrested more than 5,300 individuals and deported more than 2,100 foreign nationals.

ICE encourages the reporting of suspected child predators and any suspicious activity through its toll-free hotline at 1-866-DHS-2ICE. Investigators staff this hotline around the clock.

Suspected child sexual exploitation or missing children may be reported to the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children, an Operation Predator partner, at 1-800-843-5678 or

<http://www.cybertipline.com>.

Additional information about Operation Predator is available on the web at [www.ice.gov](http://www.ice.gov).

# ICE #

*U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement was established in March 2003 as the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security. ICE is comprised of five integrated divisions that form a 21st century law enforcement agency with broad responsibilities for a number of key homeland security priorities.*